

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: December 13, 2017**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Dave Breaux, Mr. Patrick Hundley, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge, and Ms. Caitlyn Thompson (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. George Beals and Ms. Ashley Griffin

**Guests:** Ms. Lakenya Davis, VA Certifying Official, Registrar's Office  
Sgt. Larry Harris, Veterans Services Outreach Officer

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on December 13, 2017. The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Rutledge, seconded by Dr. Breaux, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on December 4, 2017.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge welcomed and introduced Ms. LaKenya Davis and Sergeant Larry Harris. President LaForge presented them with the Seven Seals Award, which was presented to university presidents at the IHL Board meeting in November. President LaForge commended them on being Delta State's resource for all items related to veterans' affairs. Ms. Davis said that she loves to serve our veterans and stated that veterans are some of Delta State's highest performing students. Delta State has approximately 62 veterans enrolled and 40 of those students are active duty. Ms. Davis stated most of the veterans take courses on campus. Sergeant Harris stated he plans to do more outreach next semester to make sure the Delta and surrounding areas know the benefits offered to veterans and their families with regards to education. President LaForge expressed his gratitude to them for their work in keeping Delta State a veteran friendly university.
- President LaForge announced that he had department visits with Facilities Management and Accounting, Payroll, and Procurement last week. He has enjoyed learning more about departments on campus.
- University Advancement hosted their annual Retiree Christmas Party last week. President LaForge stated it was a great event.
- President LaForge hosted his fifth Faculty and Staff lunch last week. Mr. Mayers shared he has heard great things about the lunches. His coaches have been pleased to be invited and to be able to meet new people.
- President LaForge traveled to Madison last week for recruiting purposes to visit with Madison-Ridgeland Academy. President LaForge is pleased to visit such great schools in the Jackson Metroplex.

- President LaForge attended the South Delta Alumni event at the Onward Store last week. He stated it was a great event with a great crowd.
- Dr. McAdams stated that the commencement ceremonies went well last weekend.
- President LaForge extended his appreciation to Cabinet Members for rolling out the green carpet for Dr. Percy Malone. President LaForge shared that Dr. Malone wants to help students who need assistance staying in school and being successful.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Mr. Mayers was pleased to report the efficiency of getting grades in this semester with the help of the Student Athlete Support Services office. Mr. Mayers announced that 40 football players had at least a 3.0 GPA, and three football players had a 4.0 GPA. Mr. Mayers hosted his 32<sup>nd</sup> dinner for the swimming and diving team on Monday. The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Delta State Athletics Christmas Invitational Swimming and Diving Meet begins on Saturday and continues through Tuesday. President LaForge commended Mr. Mayers on the work he has done with Athletics and as being the longest serving employee on campus.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities. Statesmen Boulevard remains ahead of schedule. The project needs additional funds for more landscaping. The Zeigel Hall project had a change order of \$25,000, and the Bureau of Buildings released \$75,000 into the project. The next step for the project is to install sheetrock on all of the walls. Young-Mauldin Cafeteria remains ahead of schedule. Facilities Management staff will begin replacing the windows in Kent Wyatt Hall next week. The HVAC controls for Gibson-Gunn should be installed by the second week in January. The lights for the Roberts-LaForge Library are on hold until the grant from Entergy is approved.
- President LaForge traveled to Jackson on Monday to meet with Ms. Carol Puckett to update her on the campaign. During his time in Jackson, President LaForge met with Mr. Sam Hall, Executive Editor of *The Clarion Ledger*. Mr. Hundley and Ms. Jennifer Phillips accompanied President LaForge in the meeting. President LaForge felt it was a great meeting. He shared with Mr. Hall that Delta State feels as if we are underrepresented in his publication. President LaForge stated *The Clarion Ledger* plans to take a brand new look at how they report about the IHL universities, and they would like to include more about Delta State in the publication. Communications and Marketing will be more proactive in sending relevant information to *The Clarion Ledger*.
- Ms. Thompson informed Cabinet Members the Staff Council Holiday Breakfast occurs tomorrow morning in the atrium of Kent Wyatt Hall. The Country Club and Starving Musician are catering the event. The start time is 8:30 a.m.
- The Cleveland Music Foundation Board meets on Thursday. President LaForge conferred with Dr. McAdams to nominate another Delta State associate to the Board. He nominated Dr. Karen Fosheim, Chair of the Department of Music.
- President LaForge travels to Tunica Thursday afternoon to give a campaign update to Mr. Tim Harvey.
- President LaForge departs for the holidays on Saturday. Mr. Fred Smith, CEO of FedEx, invited President LaForge and his family to attend a Redskins Football game as his guest on Sunday.
- President LaForge reminded Cabinet Members that staff return from the holidays on January 2.

#### **CABINET TOPIC**

None

#### **BUSINESS**

#### **Action**

None

**Discussion**

**Center for Teaching and Learning.....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams announced a director for the Center for Teaching and Learning was hired. Dr. Gray Kane will assume this role in January 2018. Dr. Kane has been in charge of faculty development at the Center for Teaching and Learning at Austin Peay State University for the past eight years. He has extensive experience working collaboratively with faculty in creating meaningful professional development experiences across campus. His undergraduate and master’s degrees are in English from Florida International University, and he holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Mississippi. His background merges nicely with our goal of preparing professors to teach writing enhanced courses. Dr. McAdams thanked the search committee for their efforts in bringing this search to a successful conclusion.

**New Student Week schedule .....Dr. Bennett**

Dr. Bennett finalized the New Student Week schedule. The New Student Week will take place from August 12 through August 18. It is her hope that the New Student Week will instill a sense of involvement in students. Students will be contacted prior to new student orientation about New Student Week and the students will remain with their respective Orientation Leader throughout this time. Dr. Bennett wants students to be excited about this week. She stated the delivery and message of the week will help in its success. Ms. Thompson suggested that Dr. Bennett continue working with Dr. Jon Westfall as several of the activities in the New Student Week overlap with First Year Seminar.

**Additional Information**

- Mr. Hundley distributed to Cabinet Members the annual giving brochure.
- Ms. Thompson stated Staff Council’s Toy Drive concludes tomorrow.
- President LaForge expressed his gratitude for Ms. Thompson’s work at Delta State, and he offered her his best wishes as she begins a new career endeavor next month. Ms. Thompson stated she has enjoyed her time at Delta State and will miss everyone. She stated Mr. Davlon Miller will move into the Chair position for Staff Council in the new year.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Winter Holidays, Thursday, December 21, 2017 through Monday, January 1, 2018
- Classes begin Monday, January 8, 2018
- The Sound of Music, January 25, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- RENT, March 1, 8:00 p.m., BPAC

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, January 8
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.